DECLASSIFIED

MEMORANDUM OF CONVERSATION

April 14, 1952

Subject: St. Lawrence Seaway and Power Project

Participants: For the U.S.
The President
Secretary of State
Under Secretary of State
Charles D. Murphy, Counsel to the President
Stanley Woodward, U. S. Ambassador to Canada

For Canada:
Hon. Lester B. Pearson, Minister of External Affairs
Hon. Lionel Chevrier, Minister of Transport & Communications
Hon. Hume Wrong, Canadian Ambassador to the U.S.

Copies to: The Secretary
Under Secretary
Mr. Murphy
Mr. Fisher, L
Mr. Raynor, BNA
Mr. Peterson, BNA
Mr. Gorrie, NSRB
Embassy, Ottawa

The President opened the meeting by saying that we are all very much interested in the St. Lawrence and its development; that the Canadians had waited for a long time for the U.S. to take Congressional action; that they had been very patient with us and that the time had come to act. The President mentioned the bill now before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and said that there was some chance for this bill within the next few weeks. He said that he would like to wait for thirty days to see what action the Senate might take on the bill, provided that the Canadians had no serious objection.

Mr. Pearson replied to the effect that this would be satisfactory but what his Government wanted to do more than anything else at present was to get an application before the International Joint Commission and that they would like to have a simultaneous application made by the United States Government or some agency in the United States.

The President stated his assent, saying that such an application to the International Joint Commission might hurry up the Congress and that that would be all to the good.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
Mr. Chevrier
REVIEWED BY CKC DATE 4-1-81
EXEMPTIONS
PDS☐or XDS☐EXT. DATE
TS AUTH REASON(S)
ENDORSE EXISTING MARKINGS ☐
DECLASSIFIED☑ RELEASABLE☑
REASON ☐
BY

DECLASSIFIED

Mr. Chevrier said that the Canadian application could be gotten ready very quickly, indicating that it would be a matter of days. Mr. Murphy said that our application might take a little longer as there is a good deal of work that remains to be done. The President told Mr. Murphy to prod our people (the Interdepartmental Committee) and get the application ready as soon as possible.

Mr. Murphy raised with the President the question whether by "30 days" he meant for action by the Senate, saying that he hoped the House of Representatives might be given a little longer to consider the St. Lawrence bill in the Public Works Committee. The President indicated that what he had in mind was that the Senate should be given until mid May for action.

The Secretary said that he would like to ask whether an application would have to be made to the IJC for construction of the Seaway apart from the power project. Mr. Pearson and Mr. Chevrier both agreed that it was not the Canadian view that such an application would have to be made for the construction of the Seaway alone and that they preferred not to make such an application if the seaway were to be developed on the Canadian side as a Canadian project. However, there was no thought of separating the seaway from the power project and that, if we wanted assurances that the seaway would be built simultaneously with the power project, they would be glad to give us such assurances in any form that we liked. Mr. Murphy indicated that he thought such assurances would be desirable.

In summary, the Secretary said that it was now our understanding that the Senate would probably consider the St. Lawrence legislation on April 22 or thereabouts; that it should be given until mid May for disposition of the legislation; that, meanwhile, an application should be prepared by the U.S. and by Canada for reference to the IJC without designating the power agency in the United States; and that this application to the IJC was to be made without prejudice to any action by the Congress. Mr. Pearson concurred, stating that it was the Canadian Government's wish that the St. Lawrence should be jointly developed. However, the application to the International Joint Commission would not prejudice Congressional action.

In conclusion, the President and the Secretary referred again to the restraint Canada had shown on the seaway, expressing our appreciation of their patience.

Mr. Pearson thanked the President and remarked jocularly that it was only in the past couple of years that they realized what a great nation Canada had become and that before that they hadn't dreamed of building the seaway alone.

EUR:SWoodward/md:shg

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
PREVIEWED BY CEC DATE 7-1-81
☐ or XDC ☐ EXT. DATE
TS AUTH. REASON(S)
ENDORSE EXISTING MARKINGS ☐
DECLASSIFIED/RELEASABLE ☑
RELEASE DENIED ☐
PA or FOI EXEMPTIONS

DECLASSIFIED